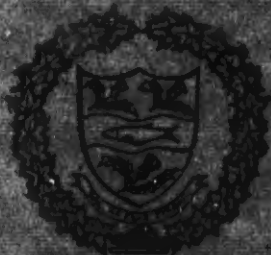


Insulters of Death

**AND OTHER POEMS OF
THE GREAT DEPARTURE**



A Book of Solace

BY

JOHN DANIEL LOGAN

**8th OVERSEAS BATTALION, C. I. F.
NOVA SCOTIA HIGHLAND BRIGADE**

Can.

Logan, John D.

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INSULTERS OF DEATH

AND OTHER POEMS OF
THE GREAT DEPARTURE

With a Prose Preachment entitled "The Fatal Paradox
and Sin of Sorrow for the Dead."

BY

JOHN DANIEL LOGAN

85th Overseas Battalion, C. E. F.,
Nova Scotia Highland Brigade.

Author of "Preludes, Sonnets and Other Verses,"
"Songs of the Makers of Canada," Etc., Etc.

O great departures! O prosperities!
Ventures and consummations!—you are hence:
Hence from the safe denials and pieties
Which life is eased and ruined and pleased of;
For the strong heart conceives no bounds of love;
The soul no measure of magnificence!

—George Cabot Lodge.

HALIFAX, N. S.
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1916

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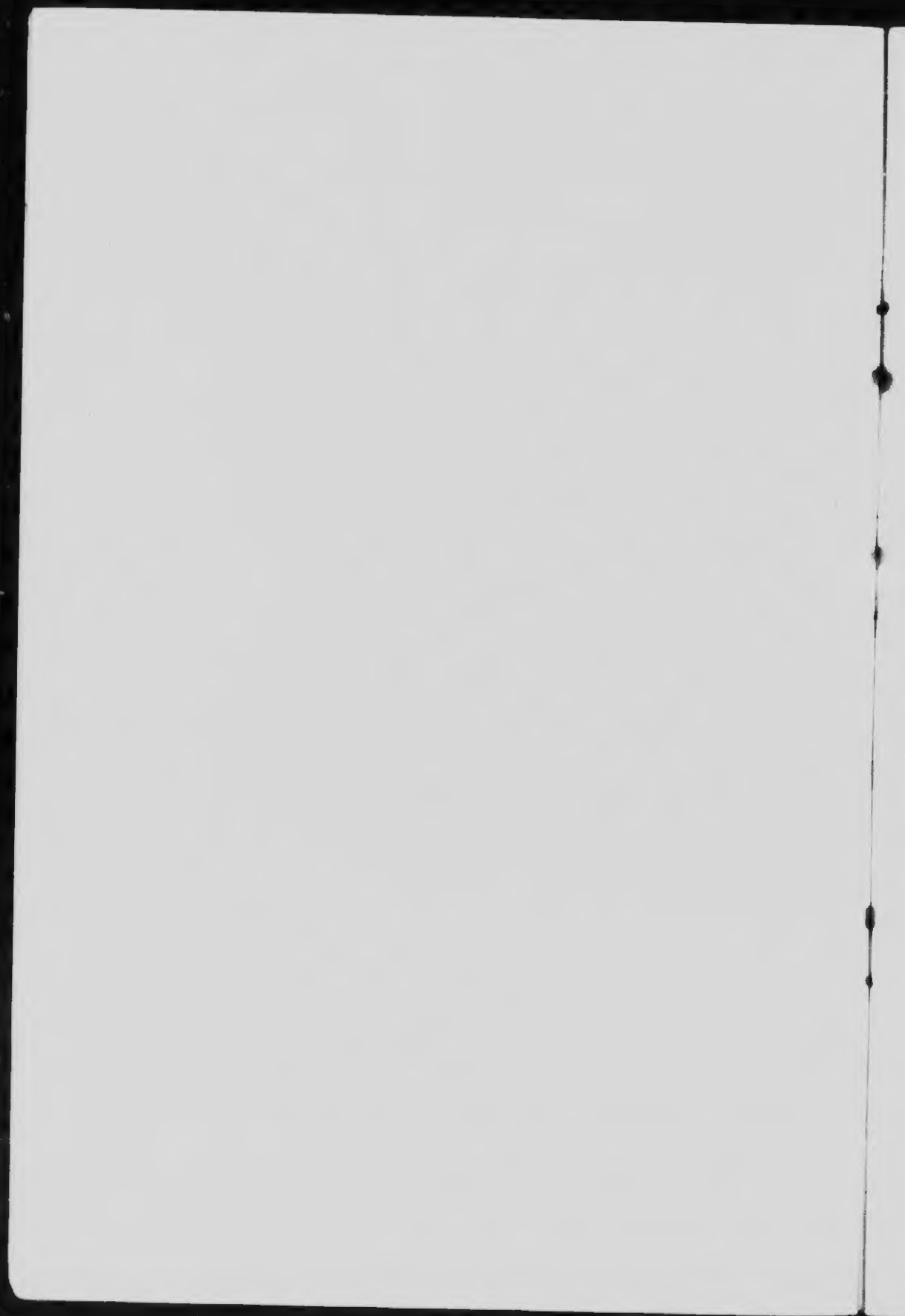
TO
ALVIN F. MACDONALD,
Managing Editor, The Morning Chronicle, Halifax, N. S.,

COLONEL WILLIAM ERNEST THOMPSON,
Assistant Adjutant General and Officer in charge of Administration,
Military District No. 6, Canadian Militia, Halifax, N. S.,
Commandant, Aldershot Camp, N. S., 1916.,

and

CAPTAIN JOTHAM W. LOGAN,
63rd Regiment Halifax Rifles, Canadian Militia, 25th Overseas Battalion,
Canadian Expeditionary Force, Halifax, N. S.,
"Somewhere in France."

Devoted, Resolute and Indefatigable Canadian and Imperial Patriots
in Word and in Deed.



PREFACE.

IN an essay entitled "The Martial Verse of Canadian Poetesses" (*The Canadian Magazine*, April, 1913) I remarked a unique phenomenon in the literary history of Canada. To Canadian poetesses, not to Canadian poets, belongs the distinction of having written inspirational and commemorative martial verse of such superior quality as to win the admiration and express commendation of authoritative English and American critics and poets. I observe now that literary history in Canada is repeating this phenomenon.

The first, and still the most engaging, volume (booklet) of poems occasioned by the current war and written by a Canadian, is "Grey Knitting and Other Poems" (Toronto, 1914) by Katherine Hale (Mrs. J. W. Garvin), a versatile woman-of-letters, gifted poetess, and incisive critic of the fine arts. Authoritative English and American critics have given the poems in "Grey Knitting" high praise. They are, however, surpassed in vision, beauty and nobility by this author's single-poem volume now in press—"The White Comrade"—a long poem dealing mystically with Christ and the current war and remarkable for fine descriptive passages. Poets and critics who have read the MS. or sheets anticipate that, on publication, "The White Comrade" will be pronounced to be the finest and noblest poem by an English-speaking poet or poetess on a theme suggested by the world-war.

Dr. Thomas O'Hagan's "Songs of Heroic Days" (Toronto, 1916) is the second volume of verse on themes suggested by the war and written by a Canadian. The poems, however, are really popular *jeux d'esprit*, and necessarily lack the spiritual beauty or dignity, the originality of conception and the pure emotional appeal, as well as the fine artistry, of Katherine Hale's tender, moving and noble poetry in her "Grey Knitting" and "The White Comrade." Two other volumes of Canadian verse, more or less directly or indirectly connected with the current war may be noted—"Hearts of Gold" (Toronto, 1915, being reprints of a series of Prize Poems on persons and incidents notable in Canadian history, published in *The Globe*, Toronto, and compiled and edited by Mrs. Jean Blewett; and "A Band of Purple" (Toronto 1915, being a collection of martial verse, very unequal, if not indifferent, in quality, compiled by Mrs. Lillie Brooks).

On the other hand, genuinely original and finely wrought single poems—quite worthy to stand beside the best work of English and American poets who have written verse inspired by the current war—have been composed by Canadian poets. English and American critics have signalized as authentic poetry Rev. Dr. J. B. Dollard's compellingly beautiful sonnet to the memory of Rupert Brooke, Lieut. Arthur S. Bourinot's fine sonnet on the same theme, and Lieut. Lloyd Roberts's strikingly original and impressive "call to arms" verses, "Come Quietly, England" and his equally original and impressive anti-pacifist verses, "I Must." Fine and moving is Duncan Campbell Scott's noble sonnet, "To A Canadian Lad Killed in the War." Gripping as inspirational martial verse is Douglas Durkin's spirited poem, "The Fighting Men of Canada." Also worth noting, especially after the sadly bathetic performance of the Poet Laureate to memorialize the death of Kitchener, are S. Morgan-Powell's unrhymed iambics "Kitchener's Work," and T. A. Browne's magniloquent, but unfortunately entitled, threnody "Kismet." There are other respectable single martial poems by Canadians. But considering the work of Katherine Hale, Duncan Campbell Scott, Dr. Dollard, Lieut. Lloyd Roberts, Lieut. Arthur S. Bourinot, Douglas Durkin, S. Morgan-Powell and T. A. Browne as representing the qualitative acme of original verse that has been inspired by the current war and that justly can be regarded as authentic poetry, we may truthfully say that the output in this *genre* by Canadians, though sparse, is worthy to be commended, and even signalized, in any general critical review of the martial verse occasioned by the current war.

Whether, or where, my own verses in this little volume in hand would be placed in such a review is not now a question. I may note, however, that the poems form the third volume of verses by a Canadian, and the first by a Nova Scotian, on themes suggested by the great world-war. They are, with four exceptions, a series of collected fugitive poems, written under all sorts of awkward and uninspiring environments by one who is a journalist and a soldier. They were written one by one, under the inspiration of the vision of death, and especially heroic death, as the supreme venture and consummation possible to the soul of man. In so far as they had an express aim other than their attempted poetic treatment of death, they were meant to give the living who had been robbed of their beloved new and reasonable solace for the spirit, by making death beautiful and the resurrection of the dead in thought, affectionate reverie, and tender communion a consoling, sustaining, and even inspiring, experience. The unexpected receipt of many letters, from poets and critics, appreciative of several of the poems—particularly "Insulters of Death" "Sursum Corda," "Renouncement," and more particularly "For An Only Son" and "Timor Mortis"—has led me to publish them and their companions in permanent form, not as a contribution to Canadian literature, but in the hope that they will again and better perform their original function of solacing the bereaved and of making death itself, as the late Charles Frohman truly and winningly put it, become in thought what it is in fact, the most beautiful adventure in life.

The PROSE PREACHMENT has directly a similar aim. Both the Preachment and the Appended NOTES to the poems should be read in connection with the verses.

In conclusion: I am indebted to Mr. Alvin F. Macdonald, Managing Editor of *The Morning Chronicle*, Halifax, N. S., for permission to reprint the poems which originally were published in that journal. He is a former schoolmate and college-mate and a colleague in journalism. For a decade or more he has sat in the editorial chair of his renowned predecessor, Joseph Howe, and admirably he is maintaining the ideals of Howe, who, as I have said elsewhere, raised journalism in Canada to the dignity of literature. The two other dedicatees, Colonel Thompson and Captain Logan, are also former school and college mates. Colonel Thompson long ago on the athletic field, where he shone as a football star of the first magnitude, disclosed those gifts in forthright practical thinking that meets an exigency, and the fearlessness and indomitableness, which are conspicuous now in his military thinking and conduct. Captain Logan did not shine so brilliantly as an athlete, but he had in him all the sturdy, capable manhood virtues which have since gained recognition on the battlefield, "somewhere in France," with "the fighting 25th" of Nova Scotia.

It is an inestimable experience for me to have such friends as these three sturdy, efficient Nova Scotians, who have eminently the authentic Nova Scotia spirit, and to be permitted by them to enhance my name by linking it with theirs, as I do, in dedicating this little volume to them.

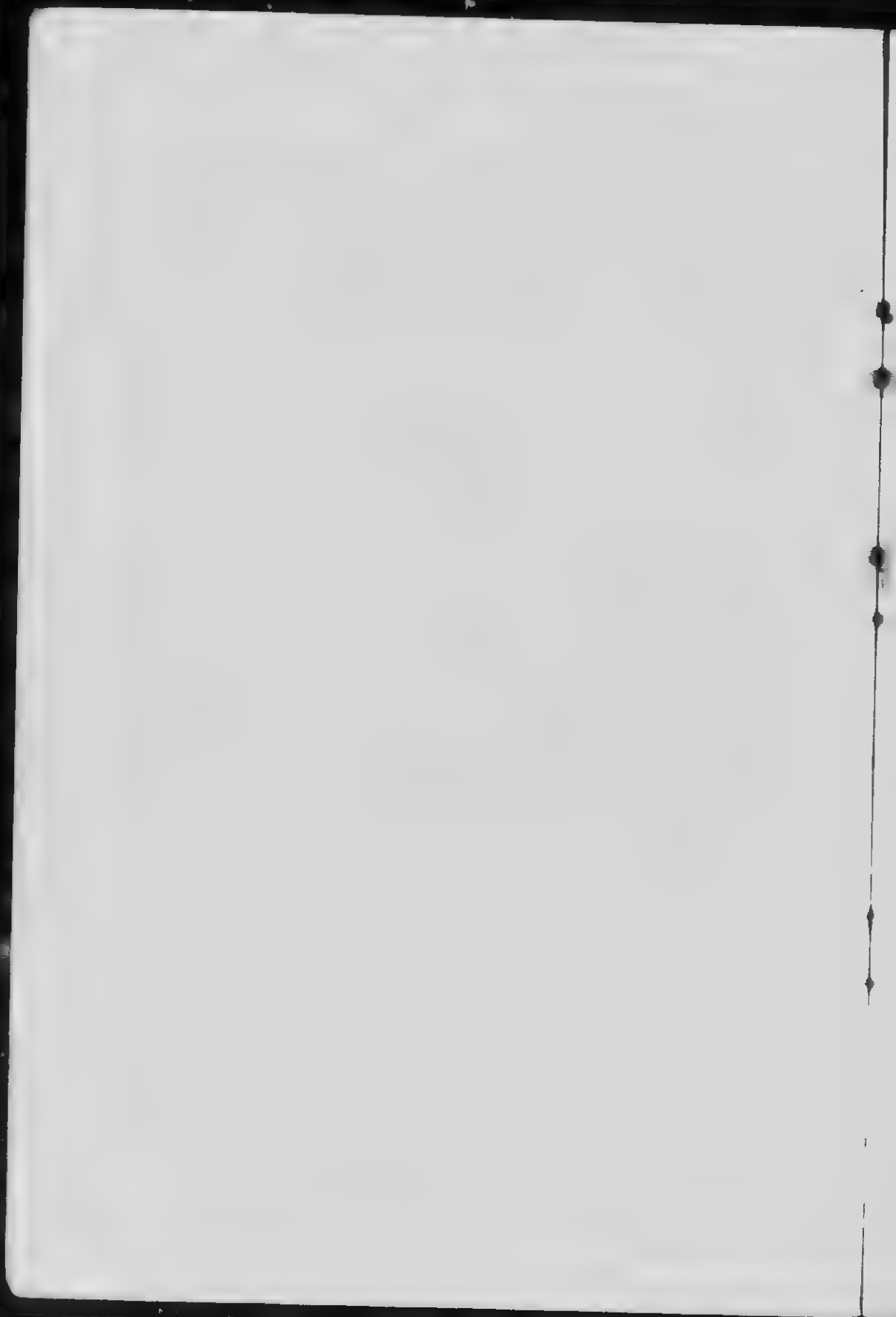
And now, at the beginning of the third year of the great and iniquitous war which has bereaved untold members of the Canadian people, I send forth, hopefully to them, the only gift of the spirit that I have for them, my Book of Solace. If it should console, sustain, and revive even one broken father or stricken mother—whose heroic dead are, in my own admiring thought and honorable remembrance of them, also my dead—this Book of Solace will have abundantly fulfilled its purpose.

Aldershot Camp,
August 4th, 1916.

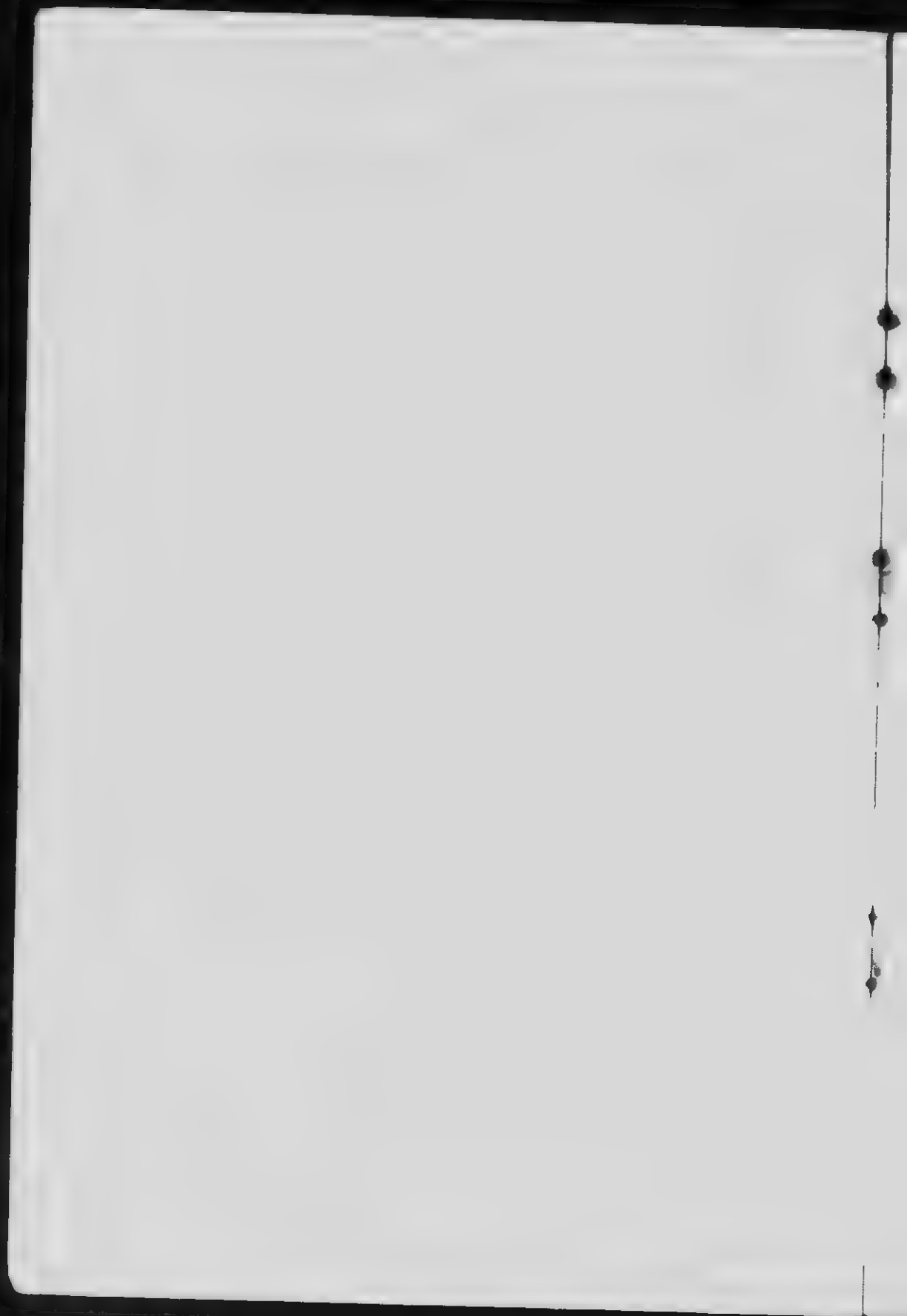
J. D. LOGAN

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INSULTERS OF DEATH
AND OTHER POEMS



INVOCATION.

COME, Happy Dead, up from the phantomed places
Wherein you walk sin-cleansed, strong and serene!—
Come, smiling now as when your friendly faces
Were love-stars in the loneliness terrene!

The world is turmoil, and affrights my soul—
The times are mad, and men live mirthless days;
War's awful discords clang from pole to pole,
And the Bird of Life has ceased his matin-lays.

But I have joy vouchsafed from you who passed,—
Revisitings of your dear forms and faces.
So will I turn away to you at last,
And call you back to me from phantomed places.

Then come, O Happy Dead,—come while I hear
My heart's mute linnets hesitantly tuning:
Steal up the unseen slopes to me, and clear
My songs of Death with tender, wise communing!

THE EVERLASTING LOVE AND MERCY.

But the souls of the righteous are in the hands of God and there shall be no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die; and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction; but they are in peace.—The Book of Wisdom (Apocrypha), III, 1.

If I am asked what I think of the eternal salvation of a brave man who has consciously given his life in defence of his country's honor and in vindication of violated justice, I shall not hesitate to reply that, without any doubt whatever, Christ crowns his military valor, and that death, accepted in this Christian spirit, assures the safety of that man's soul. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."—Pastoral Letter, Christmas, 1914, by Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines, Belgium.

INSULTERS OF DEATH.

A Paean, With a Requiem, for the Heroic Canadians Who Fell on the Battlefields of Flanders and France.

AUTHOR'S NOTE:—The unique phrase which forms the title of the following verses, is derived from the ancient Gaelic. In the Gaelic sagas of the Red Branch Knights, the heroes, especially Cuchullain, are described, by suggestive phraseology, as rushing into the battle fray, hurling insults at Death. So fought my countrymen at Ypres and elsewhere. God be thanked that from Canada there went to the Great War men who more than matched Satan and his futile hour with deeds imperishable in glory and eternal in significance. Henceforth we who, through their sacrifice, remain, and those who follow after us, shall be justly proud citizens of a justly proud country, the new Canada.

(I) Paean of Canadian Valor.

HOW fared ye, Sons of Mine, on Flanders' fields,
And how fared ye who fought in La Belle France?
 Stood ye fearlessly,
 Strove ye valiantly,
Against the hell-begotten, hate-inspired might
 Which he, who is the world's Arch-Tyrant, wields
 By merely shot and shell, and sword and lance?
 Fought ye defiantly,
 Held ye unfalteringly
Our British battlelines, for Justice and for Right?
 Kept ye, from morn till eve, from eve till morn,
 The flag of that brave land which never yields,
 High-flung in face of Teuton strength and scorn?

*Hearts of the Mapleland—Insulters of Death!
Hear how your grateful country answereth!*

As your own homeland Maples stoutly stand,
 Unquailing and unmoved, against the frore,
 Wild winter storms that rush and roar,
With iron winds, across your dear Canadian land,
So stood ye, Sons, unbending, unafraid, before
The Hunnish hordes, wrought havoc with their proud array,
And hurled them, vanquished, from the hellish fray.
Oh, swiftly, Sons, ye struck, and gallantly ye gave

Those ruthless throngs their due, and swept them to the grave.
Ay, valiantly ye fought, and nobly fell and died,
Shattered the Teuton strength, and broke the Teuton pride!

O dear, dead Sons of Mine!
Who fought for Right, nor feared to die,
Your own land vows, in what strange lands ye lie,
Each lowly, lonely grave
Of ye who died to save,
Shall be for her a holy shrine.
Sleep, Sons, where each of ye in France or Flanders rests—
With dust of maple leaves upon your peaceful breasts!
Hearts of the Mapleland—Insulters of Death!
Thus to the world your country answereth.

(II) Requiem for the Canadian Dead.

O God of Righteous Battles whose Son is Prince of Peace!
When Thy reveillé sounds for all the dead to rise
From out the mortal grave, let it be well with these
Who gladly made the Great, Immortal Sacrifice,
To stablish Righteousness and cause all wars to cease.
They gave the All that men can give:
They gave Themselves that men might live.
They are Christ's heroes. Lo, on their brows Love's diadem!
O God of Righteous Battles, let it be well with them!
Hearts of the Mapleland—Insulters of Death!
It shall be well with ye, Love answereth.

TIMOR MORTIS.

Written in Prospect of Going to the European Battle-Front.

"For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother.
And gentlemen in England now abed
Shall think themselves accursed they were not here."

Shak., *King Hen. V.*—Act IV, sc. 3 (King's speech prior to the battle of Agincourt).

I WEND my ways with one dire dread
Now daily in my heart:
The fear of death obsesses me—
The fear that I may pass
Too soon for my desiring eyes to see
The English camps, and for my feet to tread
The English green-sward grass;
That I who've heard my God's, my King's, my Country's claims
And, though belated, have at length begun
A larger life of holier aims
Than was my wont, may suddenly depart
This shattered world to utter oblivion,
Ere I, in Christian chivalry,
With brave, devoted comrades dauntlessly have stood face to the
foe
On Flanders' fatal fields and struck a single blow
For man's dear brotherhood and worldwide liberty,
Or ere, upon the blood-steeped slopes
Of France, I've met—mine eyes afront, my soul quite undismay-
ed—
The Hunnish cannons' fearful fusilade
Or done my share to still the Hunnish hopes,
And thus to leave secure, ev'n if by my poor martyrdom,
A happier heritage to generations yet to come.

Dear God, oh, privilege me the fullest bloom
Of vital-strength, that I may pay the price
For my too selfish, easeful days; spare me to live
That I, if it should be Thy will, may sacrifice
The meagre all I now can give,
And, falling, lie obscurely laid within a nameless tomb.
Perchance, round where mine unknown grave may be,
Unshaded by Canadian maples, unsung by winds from my Acadian
sea,
I shall in spirit-state revisit foreign slope or plain
On which I fell, and there aloft descry
The Flag of England still flaunting victory to the sky,
'Neath where the hellish holocaust once swept amain,
And I shall know I died not in dishonor nor in vain,
But that I may, at home, in peace, untried, yield up my breath—
This is my direst dread, my fear, of thee, O Death!

SURSUM CORDA.

An Easter Canticle for Time of War.

AT THE glory-gates of the star-gemmed sky,
In the holy hush of the Easter Morn,
To the race that deemed the world God-lorn,
Sang a white-winged host, chanting clear and high
A hymn of triumph for Man's inspiring—
To quell his doubt and his dread inquiring.

"Oh, Faith," they sang "is Life's immutable Musician:
Faith sits serene at God's great organ-keys,
And out of the myriad, mad cacophonies
Of mundane strife and death and devastation
Re-weaveth chords of Paradisal harmonies.

Lift up your hearts, O Men, and cease your low imagining:
Jehovah still is everywhere and still in everything.
Though war-winds wrack and dear blood watereth
The earth, Jehovah lives and guides, nor slumbereth.
On earth ye heed hell's howling discords; we
In heaven hark within the diapason of eternity
The dissonances of finitude and time
Resolved in Love's eternal symphony.

So list ye with the inward ear,
And also ye shall hear
God's mighty music, solemn and sublime,
Clear cadencing from far and near
Its solace to humanity.
Still Love and Faith in Heaven abide perennially,
And all the noble train of Chivalry.
Though Lust and Hatred stalk and slay
The innocent, Hope fails not for the coming of the day
When Right shall kiss the lips of Peace; and still arise
Staunch souls who gladly make the martyr's sacrifice.
But not in vain! The Triumph Song of Love and Death
Into the Symphony Celestial entereth."

RENOUNCEMENT.

A Soldier's Farewell to His Beloved on His Going to War.

KISS me good-bye!—

And think not, dear, I love thee less
In that I haste from thy soft charms
At War's reverberant alarms.

I am in bond to other faithfulness:

My country calls me—I must go
To foil my country's direst foe
On far-off fields incarnadin'd.
But thy too tender love is blind
With fear and cannot see

If that I give myself, I also, dear, give thee.

Kiss me goodbye!—

And let thine eyes be eloquent
Of constant love while I am gone;
And this will be my benison
Midst scenes where death is imminent.

Nay, dear, give me your lips—and have no dread.

But should I fall think me not dead:
Although I yield my mortal breath,
We'll be inseparable in death.

For this must ever be—

If that I give myself, I also, dear, give thee.

A REQUIEM.

For the late Sergeant Alexander J. Mac Donald of "The Black Watch"
(Royal Highlanders), killed in Action, in Mesopotamia, January 21st, 1916.

"Mo chreach lúch nam breacan balla-bhreac,
Bhi le lasair marabh na sineadh."

(*'My fond heart, yearning, ever visits where
My bonnie tartaned lad lies slain—out there*)

—From the Gaelic.

LO, in that Islam land, where Turk and Hun
Deal death to God's anointed hosts for Right
And trample Freedom down, there now lies one
Who sleeps within the arms of Mortal Night.

(*Requiem aeternam dona ei, Domine*).

Brave scion of a noble race, he heard
The weak and ravaged nations' anguished call
For justice, peace and liberty; and spurred
Unto the cause, he gave Himself—his All.

(*Requiem aeternam dona ei, Domine*).

Recked he the cost? Feared he to die? Not he;
But gladly chose the Cross—and won the Crown;
Warring for Right, he fell full gloriously,
And on his grave the Persian stars look down.

(*Requiem aeternam dona ei, Domine*).

Remember him, O Lord, on that great day
When saint and sinner stand before Thy throne;
Remember his souls's sacrifice, we pray,
And mark him worthy for Thy very own.

(*Requiem aeternam dona ei, Domine*).

THE GREATER LOVE.

A Requiescat for Father Flinn, who Fell at Gallipoli.

AT MORN the Dawn woke startled, gray, and froze,
The Sun blanched ere he topped his Eastern gate,
The Sea grew sullen and the promonts wore
The frowning aspect of the face of Fate—
Presaging thus the end of mortal days
For one of priestly mien and warrior-race,
On far Gallipoli's unchristian shore.

Anointed to the offices of Love,
And consecrate to servitude of Peace,
He scorned to tread the pleasant paths of ease
While Freedom's fearful shrieks were heard above

War's howling holocaust. He knew his role
To be no longer by the peaceful shrine,
But where the death-bolts rend the battle-line—
To solace and to shrive each passing soul.

So fared he forth, with his own comrade-band,
So fared he forth—Alas, how sad to tell,
He fell too soon, and sleeps near where he fell,—
A Christian hero in an Islam land!

There let him lie, within his lethal mound,
The constant stars his silent sentinels,—
There let him sleep, unwitting our farewells,
To rest till God the last reveillé sound.

FOR AN ONLY SON.

An Elegiac Idyll For One Who Fell In Battle in the Strength
and Beauty of Early Manhood.

Go thy way, thy son liveth.—St. John, 4:50.

A DARK road runneth to Avalon,
The happy valley of Avalon;
And spectral heroes foregather where
The dark road endeth in Avalon:
In the ghostly light they foregather there;
And oft they scan with expectant eyes
The way that windeth to Paradise:
They scan the way for the young and fair
Who fell in battle; and they greet them, "Hail!
And Welcome, Comrades! to the mystic vale,
The hallowed valley of Avalon."
For Avalon's vale is the Warrior's Land,
And Avalon's Halls are the Hero's Home;
And God smiles down on the happy band
Of his young true Knights the while they roam
The lilled lawns of fair Avalon.

A river floweth through Avalon,
The happy valley of Avalon;
The spectral Knights and Captains and Kings
Kneel by the river in Avalon,
And drink deep draughts from the crystal springs.
The waters give them a sweet increase
Of endless youth and pervasive peace;
And the valley rings with their chorusing:—
"Hail, Love that died—and Death, all hail!
Death brought New Life in the lilled vale,
The hallowed valley of Avalon."
For Avalon's vale is the mystic Land
Of the Ever-Young; in that paradise
God's smile shines down on his Warrior-band,
And the young Knights' laughter cleaveth the skies
In the happy valley of Avalon.

The knightly train by the waters wan
That lave the valley of Avalon,
Spied late, in his manhood's first estate,
A new Knight speeding to Avalon.
Fair was his form, and his step elate;
With eyes a-front and a soldier's mien
He wended his way to the blissful scene.

The valiant Kings and the Captains great
 Stood up to greet him; and cried, "Good hail!
 And Welcome, Comrade! to the mystic vale,
 The happy valley of Avalon."
For Avalon's vale is the Warrior's Land,
 And Avalon's Halls are the Hero's Home;
And God smiles down on the happy band
 Of his young true Knights the while they roam
 The lilled lawns of fair Avalon.

Lo, a mother mourns for an only son
 Who dwelleth now in far Avalon.
In joy she bore him, in hope she plann'd,
 And recked not the road to Avalon.
But came the day of the Great Demand
 For her heart's one pearl above all price,
 And she gave her son to the sacrifice.
He lies not dead in an alien land;
 From that dread place where his body fell
His knightly spirit passed proudly on
 To the warrior-host invisible.
And the Captains mark, in the dusky dawns,
 The smile of God gild the rosy scar
On his white young brow to a golden star,
 While he roams with heroes the lilled lawns
 In the happy valley of Avalon.

POE OF PRINCETON.

Commemorating John Prentiss Poe, an Alumnus of the University of New Jersey, Princeton, and an Illustrious Athlete and Champion of Liberty and Justice. Killed in Action at Loos.

"The soul's inherent high magnificence—" G. C. Lodge.

LOVER of Life!—'twas not for consummations
That you cared most, but for adventurings
In splendid deeds—audacious aspirations
To match your will against Time's bludgeonings.
Oh, you would dare, you chaffed, tremendous things,
And wholly uncuirassed, unhelmeted,
Tilt gayly ev'n with Death—till you fell dead.
Then year by year came friends, and one by one,
Brought news of valiant deeds most nobly done
By you, John Prentiss Poe,
Whose name shall live in hearts that know—
As Poe of Princeton.

Lover of Liberty!—you went crusading
Against Oppression, like a knight of old.
Hate of tyrants your strong heart pervading,
You sped to every land where you beheld
Fair Freedom bound and lorn. Oh, swift you felled
The ravisher; and Freedom, soon unbound,
Rose up to greet you—queenly and re-crown'd.
True knight in many a land beneath the sun,
We joyed o'er news of fine deeds nobly done
By you, John Prentiss Poe,
Whose name shall live in hearts that know—
As Poe of Princeton.

Lover of Right!—when you heard Justice calling,
You rushed to meet the Myrmidons of Might.
Insulting Death midst fray blood-swat, appalling,
You ceased not warring till the lethal blight
Fell on you and you fought your last glad fight.
But though far from your fatherland you died,
You hail us still—and we are satisfied.

Brother o' Mine! lo, here, in song, I lay
My rose-gold maple-leaves,—so! one by one,—
Upon your holy earthen tomb!
And should the living come and ask me whom
I sing, whose fine deeds nobly done,
I'll smile, as if you had not died, and say:—
"I sing of one who lately went away
To fare well with his King, where day sets into day—
Christ's bold crusader, Sir Knight John Prentiss Poe,
Whose name shall live in hearts that know—
As Poe of Princeton."

FLAME OF GOD.

A Sonnet in Memory of Lieut. Rupert Brooke, Poet-Soldier. Sailed with the British Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, Feb. 1915. Died of blood-poisoning at Sycros, in the Aegean, April 23, 1915. Aged 28.

"There is a grave in Sycros, amid the white and pinkish marble of the isle, the wild thyme and the poppies, near the green and blue waters. There Rupert Brooke was buried. Thither have gone the thoughts of his countrymen, and the hearts of the young especially. It will long be so. *For a new star shines in the English heavens.*"—G. W. Woodberry, Introduction to Collected Poems of Rupert Brooke.

COMPANION of the great in song and arms,
What legacies you left us lesser men!—
Brave songs of death that quelled Death's dread alarms,
And gifts of self that cannot come again.

On earth the white, swift Flame of God you were!
Your shining speech illumed men's murky thought;
Your ventures made mere dreamers bold to dare;
Your self-surrenders dear atonements wrought.

Brother of Chaucer, Shakspeare, Byron, Keats,
And brother, too, of Drake and Wellington,
Know, Poet-Soldier treading God's retreats,
That you raised England's glory 'neath the sun:

Your rare, brave songs and deeds immortal are;
Your name in England's heav'n—a steadfast star!

THE SOUL'S SUPREME ADVENTURE.

(Exit K. of K., Orcadian Sea, June 5th, 1916).

HOW LONG, how long, O Great Mysteriarch,
Shall we, like children whimpering in the dark,
Regret Death's seizure, and perpetuate,
With coarse batrachian complaints, the lie
That men are puppets of remorseless Fate,
And pass before their rightful time to die.

Hear prince and peasant dreadfully despairing—
In faith-distraught forebodement loud declaring—
"No more shall England be our land of yore,
For loss of him whose wise, heroic spirit
Was her sustaining bulwark. Nevermore
Shall she his like imperial mind inherit."

Vain dread! From their long-silent sepulchres
Sea-sovereign England's meteor mariners
Send answering reprisals, bold and clear:—
"Naught fails, though our days ceased and bodies lie
In graves unfathomed or in sculptured bier:
Our work was done; we earned the right to die.

"But though we died, our spirits lived again
Incarnate, through the years, in other men
Who kept our England Sovereign of the Seas.
They fought, but ere they saw full victory nigh,
Their vital breath commingled with the breeze:
Their work was done; they earned the right to die."

Thus England's Seamen—Nelson, Rodney, Drake;
Then her dead Warriors as nobly spake:—
"Long have our swords been sheathed and still
That held our England's flag far-flung and high.
But slain, we took our rest with joyful will:
Our work was done; we earned the right to die.

"For though we passed, we sowed the saving seed
That issued in an equal warrior breed.
In scorn of death, or hero's coronal,
They sought the surge of legions sweeping by,
And, falling, gloried in their patriot fall:
Their work was done; they earned the right to die."

So said they. Then in nearer, clearer tone
Rose Kitchener's exultant antiphon
Above the wild, wreck-strewn Orcadian main:—
"Hence all regrets for me, in speech or sigh!
Supreme adventures vast achievements gain!
My work was done; I earned the right to die.

"But hark ye, Britons, hark ye well and heed
My trumpet-call to undissuadable high deed:—
Despite defeat or death, take heart and dare!
Fight on, fight on, and 'England Forward!' cry:
And all who fall the victory shall share,
Even though a million hearts heroic die."

Our thanks for these, O Great Mysteriarch—
These noble dead who cheer us from the dark!
They all have gone before us, one by one;
Now from their sepulchres they tell us why:
They wrought till their appointed work was done;
Then passed triumphant in their time to die.

GONE ON AHEAD AWHILE.

Deireadh gach comuinn, sgaoileadh; deireadh gach cogaidh, sìth ("The end of all meetings, parting; the end of all strivings, peace.")—From the Gaelic.

WE KNEW him well in life, and many a day
He passed us on his way,
With cheery greeting, to and fro;
But now he lay
Pondering the saffron sun sink low
Behind the blue-grey hills.
We thought to hear him murmur of the ills
Our human kind must know
From day to day;
And with his parting breath deny
The plenitude
Of earthly good.
But he whose hour had come to die
Turned on his latest bed
And blithely said:
"If one should miss me, friends, and ask if I am dead,
Let no regretful tears bedim your eye:
Just smile!
And say that I've gone on ahead awhile."

"Tears are the unwelcome gift of those whose sight
Discerns not through the shrouding night
The glory of the God-sent light
Of that immortal sun
Which shines o'er Avalon,—
Fair paradisaal home where they who fly
Man's mortal days live ever on
And tread
The larger ways; and there shall I
Wait, friends, for you
Till your own life be through.
But should one miss me soon, and ask if I am dead,
Let no regretful tears bedim your eye:
Just smile!
And say that I've gone on ahead awhile."

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IF IS not death, that sometime in a sigh
This eloquent breath shall take its speechless flight;
That sometime these bright stars, which now reply
In sunlight to the sun, shall set in night;
That this warm conscious flesh shall perish quite,
And all life's ruddy springs forget to flow;
That thoughts sha'll cease, and the immortal spright
Be lapp'd in alien clay and laid below;
It is not death to know this,—but to know
That pious thoughts, which visit at new graves
In tender pilgrimage, will cease to go
So duly and so oft,—and when grass waves
Over the past-away, there may be then
No resurrection in the minds of men.

—Thomas Hood.

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The Fatal Paradox and Sin of Sorrow For the Dead.

THE current iniquitous and ruthless war has greatly enlarged the world of Death. The only way to decrease its empire, to reduce it to insignificance, is to enlarge the world of Life. The enlargement of the world of Life is a personal duty for each individual still alive. Once undertaken, it will result in the enhancement and ennobling of existence, and in the discovery of ineffable and compelling consolation for the spirit, not only in spite of the tribulations of existence but also in very virtue of them. The only way to enlarge the world of Life is for each living individual voluntarily to establish, consciously to create connections with the noumenal, the incorporeal, the invisible, the impalpable world—the world of Spirits Departed.

I am not recommending any species of necromancy, occult science, clairvoyance, clairaudience, or spiritualistic transports. My point of view is human and logical—practicable; my aim is as practical as it is human; and my method of creating connections with the Departed is as sane as it is simple and effectual. Possibly by the following homely illustrative simile I may the more convincingly be understood to be commending a genuinely commonsense method of enlarging the world of Life.

Tyros in writing nuptial notices for the rural press are wont to use an obese platitude, if the contracting parties to a marriage happen to be residents of different towns. In poverty of imagination and vocabulary, these "society reporters" turn this engagingly balanced period:—"The bride is one of Belleville's fairest daughters; but what is Belleville's *loss* is Lakeview's *gain*." This is gallant, but it is untruthful. There is really no loss at all occasioned by the departure of the Belleville bride to the Lakeview society; there is a compensating gain "all around"—a threefold gain. Lakeview's pleasant society is enhanced by the acquisition of another winsome woman. But Belleville is compensated, and should be consoled, by the fact that the marriage union of two citizens from different towns has created a new and living connection between the two municipalities: a hitherto non-existent common social interest in the life of each other now obtains in the two communities. That is a considerable gain in social or spiritual enlargement for both municipalities. Further, though the bride has gone to a distant town, parents and friends know that she has but departed in body, and that by voluntary thought and affectionate remembrance of her she is really, if not physically, as much with them *in* Belleville as she was before her bodily

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removal to Lakeview. This, too, is a gain in the spiritual enlargement of the impalpable relations of human society and life. Still further, as material presence of a person is not a necessity for spiritual presence and communion, so there need not be regrets and tears over the removal of a person to a distant place in space: parents and friends of the departed bride know that she is just as real and alive at a distance from them as she would be if close at hand, and that they can proceed to her home and discover her there. This real possibility of *visitation* is another spiritual gain, otherwise unobtainable, and creates a new joy in existence. The truth is, then, that the departed bride, *by her very departure* from her home town to another, has enlarged the social radius and the spiritual relations and life of two physically separated communities.

In some such terms of similitude we should think of death—of the departure of our dead into the noumenal, into the spiritual world. If we individually will thus to think of death, we shall not have suffered loss by the death of those we love, but have gained a threefold good for our spirits while we sojourn on earth. For the dead have not died—our beloved have not departed—futilely, to no purpose, even for us who remain behind; they have died, departed, *to enlarge the world of life.*

Strange paradox it may seem; but recall our simile of the departed bride and we shall readily see the threefold—nay, more than threefold—gain that death brings us, the living—if we, the living, but *will* the gain to be real and ever present. Gone hence from us into another world, as our dead have gone, they wait upon us to have “other-worldly” thoughts of them, to follow them thither in affectionate memory, and to resuscitate them by spiritual communion with them, not as unreal spectres but as real persons. Sorrow—continued, excessive sorrow—over our dead is an absolute fatality: it prevents the resurrection of our dead: for it implies a belief on our part in a great gulf fixed between the living and the departed, nay, the utter vanishment and irrevocable loss of our beloved. Sorrow is equally fatal to us and to them; it blinds our eyes, so that we no longer behold the dead beckoning to us, importuning us for resuscitation in our mind and hearts; and it drives them away from us into the abyss of nothingness. This is our fault, our sin. But by memory of our dead, spiritual communing with them, we immediately establish a real and abiding connection between this world and the extra-mundane sphere—between earth and Heaven. Surely it is obvious that if there were no death, no departure hence of our beloved, there would be no “other world,” no pure and ennobling thoughts of “other-worldliness.” We are debtors to our dead—and we can be their homagers; they have opened up and made real and lovely

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the "other world" of Spirits Departed. How great a gain, then, for us on earth—this tender thinking on death as departure, this communion with our dead, this resurrection of them, which is an enlargement of the world of Life.

Again: we defeat the end of mundane existence, if we refuse to put from us the man-made, sense-created, illusion that death robs us, by taking our beloved away into an unknown and unknowable world. We are not robbed but made richer by the very death of our beloved—if we make it truth that the "really real" world is not the external world but our own inner creation—the world of the Spirit. For the latter is the absolutely eternal, ever knowable, world. Unfortunately the schools of professional metaphysicians have obfuscated our commonsense thinking about this matter; they have humbugged men and women of average intelligence and conventional culture, and when we cried for bread the metaphysicians have given us a stone. Now, metaphysical thinking, in its true method and intent, is only thinking about ideal experiences; such thought is not what professional metaphysics usually is, namely, the excogitation of abstractions from a vacuum—*ex nihilo*, but simply thinking about higher things than our bare workaday sensations, perceptions, emotions and fancies. There is no factual or empirical proof of the existence of the other world where dwell the Departed. Nor does the logic of metaphysical idealism supply a proof; or, if it does, to ordinary human beings the proof is as unmeaning, and as unsatisfying to the spirit, as the algebraical formula $(a+b)^2 = a^2 + 2ab + b^2$. The other world, the empire of the Departed, if it must be made knowable by empirical or deductive proof, will remain unknown and unknowable forever. Happily the dead, the departed, are the proof; for the evidence of the living reality of the departed, of the existence of things not seen, is the testimony of those men and women who by thought of their departed, by affectionate remembrance of them, by spiritual communion with them, have created, made real, *the living world of the dead*.

Thus are we even greater debtors to the dead. Dying, the departed have made the other world possible; they have broken down, or rent, the veil erected by sense between the known and the so-called unknown world, making the latter knowable; and by ideal creation in thought, memory, and communion on our part with the dead, which makes a *living* world of the departed, we are re-united with our beloved who have gone hence, and we have, for the gain of our spirits, enlarged the empire of Life. There is, as I said, no factual or deductive proof of this. Only each individual may know the truth who by faith and willingness tries out communion and ideal re-union with the Departed. My

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only counsel is:—Will to resurrect your dead; commune with them in thought, and love, and remembrance; and as, in ordinary experience, faith creates fact, so, in this ideal experience, this new faith and experiment in spiritual relations will create the fact of a real, living world of Spirits Departed.

Finally, recall again our simile of the departed bride. There were, no doubt, sadness and tears mingled with the joy of the marriage ceremonies and the "goodbyes." But these were pain and regret for merely temporary loss of one who was dear. There was no overwhelming "sadness of farewell." For parents and friends of the bride knew that if she were not gone too far distant they and she could revisit one another; or if she were gone so far distant that actual visitation in person was impossible, ideal visitation in thought and memory and love was always possible and effectual. Sorrow—continued, excessive sorrow—in that case, over the departure of the bride, were unreasoning and futile. So must we part with our beloved who die. They have but "gone on ahead awhile"; and altogether unreasonable is profound "sadness of farewell," as if they were lost forever, when they depart. If we do not sorrow over the absence of dear ones or of friends who dwell in far-distant or foreign lands which we may *never visit*, why should we incontinently sorrow over the departure of our beloved to a spiritual land which we ourselves inevitably *shall visit*,—nay, which we may, by thought of and communion with the departed, visit daily, hourly, through the years before we ourselves have passed? Incontinent sorrow for the dead is a sin against them—an unpardonable sin. Such sorrow is only the bleakest atheism. It denies the existence and reality of the other world; it implies a belief on our part that the dead are not merely the departed, but are dead beyond all recall, absolutely annihilated. But why thoughtlessly thus sin against our Departed, when we know that we can resurrect them in our minds, in our hearts, where they shall, if we will, never die? Let there be grief and tears at parting but let joy remain in our times of spiritual revival of the dead in thought, affectionate reverie, and tender communion with them.

Now, this is the fatal paradox and sin of sorrow for the dead. It is not by dying, that is, parting from mundane existence, that our beloved really, absolutely are dead. It is the living who make them dead, either by *sorrow*, which denies their existence in the realm of Spirits Departed, and the possibility of joyous communion with them there; or by *forgetfulness* of them, which is a refusal to resuscitate and resurrect those who have died. Men and women do not absolutely die at the moment of the dissolution of body and spirit. As a cosmological process death is no more

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significant in human beings than it is in any other animate creatures, animal or vegetable. It is merely dissolution and transmutation. Men and women become dead, *after* they die, by a slow, spiritual process—by our gradual forgetfulness of them, or, as Tom Hood beautifully and truthfully put it, when, as time passes, there comes to be of them

"No resurrection in the minds of men"

The only real and everlasting death is *oblivion*—obliteration of the departed from the thoughts, affectionate memory and converse of the living. For us, the living, to permit continued, excessive sorrow for our beloved dead, or for us to permit oblivion of them, by forgetting them totally, is to be guilty of the most terrible homicide—we utterly slay, not mortal bodies, but pure spirits. To cause such real and enduring death is an unpardonable sin.

Let us, then, resurrect, as we can, if we will, our beloved dead; and as surely as we attempt it, so surely will they come to us—

"Up the dark distance, radiant though unseen"

—nay, radiant and seen. They will come to us as companions, as comforters, as heralds of a new dawn, as our confident sustainers of joy in life and of equal joy in release from life when our work here is done. But who are they who will thus come? They are the dead, the departed, in their essential selves, divested of all those angularities of humanity that gave us pain, those waywardnesses of speech and conduct that caused us to doubt them, those contradictions in pieties and sins that made us wonder at them, or sorrow for them, while alive and to pray for them after they passed:—our dead in their pure spiritual selves, with all that was dear, delightful, and lovable about them—stars on their white brows, eyes radiant, lips eloquent with sweet and laughing speech, gently communing with us and winning us to a tender peace. And they will belong to us, by dying, by being dead in the flesh but alive in the spirit, more truly, really, vividly and helpfully than if they were with us corporeally. For love, which knows no bounds, will make them rich in lovingkindness, suffuse them with ethereal beauty, immerse them in holiness and make them radiant with a shining glory; and we shall love them and possess them as never before. While we remain on earth they will be our one ineluctable joy, our salvation, and our life's star—beckoning us to go down the slopes of mundane existence to the happy valley of Avalon, unafraid and "with unreluctant tread."

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In conclusion: this preachment is not based on a theory, nor on an intuition. It is founded on a fact of personal experience, equally possessed, and testified to, by poets and metaphysicians and by average human beings who are neither poets nor metaphysicians. These bear witness that if we, the living, resurrect our dead in thought, affectionate remembrance, and spiritual communion, they will to come us, smile ineffably upon us, and cheer us. And for those of us who thus make ourselves Companions of the Departed there shall be no more terror of death; nor weeping, nor sorrow. For imperishable Love will destroy death and wipe away all tears from our eyes; and despite whatever fortunes, good or ill, befall us while we sojourn on earth, we who resurrect our Departed and commune with them shall possess our souls in strength, serenity and peace.



AUTHOR'S NOTES.

Page 15 "Insulters of Death." The nearest approach to this phrase in modern English poetry is a participial phrase—"insulting death"—in one of the lines in Herbert Trench's epic idyll, "Deirdre Wed." I wish to impress on my readers a unique fact, namely, the central hero of the ancient Gaelic sagas, Cuchullain, while as fierce and invincible as Achilles of the Iliad, was always, as Achilles never was,—magnanimous towards his foes and even tender toward the fallen. Surely we may be proud of the fact that the British, which include the Canadian, warriors in Flanders and in France, in contrast with the brutal, ruthless Huns, display towards their foes, both those active in the fray and those that have fallen, the ancient Gaelic magnanimity and humanity of Cuchullain, the incomparable and unconquerable.

Page 17 "Timor Mortis." The philosophy of the poem is, of course, that there comes to the finite individual a time when his person and deeds *can* have significance for the Infinite, and that to miss that great opportunity, through the accident of death, is to have lived and died in vain—possibly, too, in dishonor. If the world *will* be Satanic, as it is now, we *can* match Satan and his hour and see to it that, in his despite, the world *shall* be spiritual. To be inhibited by death from doing this, when one wills to do it, would be an absolute spiritual loss; to die in the attempt to thwart Satan and save the world would be the supreme venture and consummation in having lived and served.

Page 18 "Sursum Corda" ("Lift up your hearts"). No doubt, the poem has the metaphysic of Browning's "Abt Vogler," or, at any rate, of the line—"Why rushed the discords in but that harmony might issue forth?"

Page 19 "Renouncement." The poem may suggest Lovelace's familiar lyric, but the refrain—"If that I give myself I also, dear, give thee"—is certainly more philosophical and veracious than Lovelace's unpsychological paradox—

"I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honor more."

Page 20 "A Requiem." Written to memorialize the personal loss of one who was a college chum and a colleague in journalism. The late Sergeant Mac Donald was a lineal descendant of the famous Mac Donalds of Keppoch, Scotland. In a letter to the dead soldier's family (Capt. R. Mac Donald, North Sydney, Cape Breton), Col. Wauchope, his commander, highly praises the fallen soldier's loyalty and fighting spirit.

Page 21 "The Greater Love." The late Father Finn, of the First Battalion, Dublin Fusiliers, was the first British Chaplain to fall in the current war. While succoring wounded and drowning comrades at the landing at Gallipoli, he himself fell at the edge of the strand, riddled by Islam bullets. But mortal wounds could not quench his heroic Gaelic spirit. With his latest breath he asked: "Are you fellows winning?" Then being answered in the affirmative, he smiled and passed to peace, mid the awful diapason of the thundering guns on sea and land. Thus died one of Ireland's—and Britain's—true patriot priests—poor in worldly possessions but rich in love. And, as it is written, "Greater love hath no man than this—that a man lay down his life for his friends."

Page 22 "For An Only Son." In order not to intensify another's personal sorrow, and to universalize the appeal to any parent bereaved of an only son, I do not divulge whom I have memorialized in this poem. I may say, however, that the dead soldier was a young Nova Scotian, an alumnus of my own college at Halifax, Nova Scotia, a fine athlete and a splendid specimen of Canadian manhood. But any mother who has lost by this accursed war her life's one pearl of inestimable price, has this solace—that, as Mrs. Annie Rothwell Christie beautifully put it, she is blessed amongst women who can raise empty arms to Heaven and say, "Thank God, I gave."—Avalon, the Gaelic paradise, Heaven.

Page 24 "Poe of Princeton." This is a tribute to the American sympathy with Canada and England in the cause of freedom and humanity. John Prentiss Poe, Princeton, class of '95, was my contemporary while I was a student at Harvard. He was an illustrious "football star," and, after graduating from college, went adventuring in wars. The almost colloquial lightness in the refrain of the poem is due to the fact that John P. Poe was a rare soul, possessing both a fearless spirit and a merry heart. He always concluded his letters to his old college mates with—"As ever, while water runs and grass grows—J. P. Poe."

Page 25 "To win this war—that is the work before us. It makes no difference who is working, so long as the work is done."—Lord Kitchener.

Page 26 "Flame of God." It may seem superfluous on my part again to memorialize the late English poet-warrior, after the fine poems written to his memory by Dr. Dollard, A. S. Bourinot and others. I do not emulate them. I write of Brooke because he was my personal friend and critic, from whom I received priceless material, as well as spiritual, gifts.

Page 28 "Gone On Ahead Awhile." Reprinted by request—and as a fitting *finis*—from my "Songs of the Makers of Canada and Other Homeland Lyrics" (Toronto, 1911).